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SUBJECT: SECURITY SURVEY OF MARRATANE REFUGEE CAMP -
MOZAMBIQUE

REF: STATE 00135

1. As requested per reftel, a site security survey of the Marratane Refugee Camp in Mozambique was conducted on 12 April 2005. The following information outlines the findings of the survey.

A. Interview Site

The Marratane Refugee Camp is located approximately 15 km outside of Nampula city. Travel to the site is primarily on unimproved dirt roads where speeds are often limited to 30 km per hour or less, requiring approximately 45 minutes from the UNHCR office in Nampula. 4x4 vehicles are recommended but not required during the dry season. Public transportation is limited to an informal and unregulated taxi service. American personnel are highly discouraged from using public transportation and visitors should arrange to hire a vehicle and driver for transportation to and from the camp and around Nampula. The camp consists of one primary dirt road surrounded by administrative buildings, dwellings, schools, and agricultural areas.

Only registered vehicles are permitted to enter the camp and refugees must seek special permission to leave the camp. Control of entry and exit is managed by the Policia da Republica de Mocambique (PRM). There is no physical screening of vehicles or pedestrians entering or exiting the camp, and pedestrians are also capable of entering or exiting the camp via other paths through the bush. However, camp administration and the refugee community is well aware of who enters and exits the camp, and all refugees are supposed to be registered with the camp administration.

Only one entry/exit point exists for the camp, which is controlled by the local police. This is likely the largest threat vulnerability of the camp. If rioting or strife were to occur, exit from the camp could be easily blocked in the event that an emergency evacuation of the interview team was required. There are no suitable safe havens within the camp. The closest safe haven would be the UNHCR office in Nampula or the police station in Nampula. Security at the camp is provided by ten police officers, four locally hired security guards, and ten refugee security guards. In an emergency, reinforcement security forces would be provided by the police from Nampula, and response time would be in excess of 45 minutes, if a vehicle were available. The closest USG facility is the American Embassy in Maputo, which is two hours by commercial air from Nampula International Airport. There are no known terrorist groups active in Mozambique and no current indications that U.S. citizens are being targeted by terrorist organizations. Camp residents are primarily from neighboring countries currently or recently experiencing ethnic or political violence. Residents at the camp often include both sides of the conflicts from which they escaped. Thus, the potential for violence does exist, however, incidents of such violence have been sporadic at most. Camp administration officials stated that camp residents are peaceful and for the most part are not seeking to continue the conflicts from their home nations.

Two interview sites were surveyed. The interview site at the camp would be divided between the INAR administrative building and the UNHCR building. Each of these buildings contains two to three office spaces suitable for interviews while maintaining the confidentiality of each refugee. There is limited running water and no electricity in either building, although there are suitable bathroom facilities. Requests to UNCHR should be made for use of portable generators, or other arrangements should be made if electricity is required. All visitors must exit the camp by 1600 hours. The other interview location is at the UNHCR headquarters in Nampula. This location consists of one main building of approximately 1200 square feet, plus an additional back building of approximately 600 square feet. This location offers two to three possible offices for interviews, electricity, and running water. The UNHCR office is guarded by one local guard and is within close proximity to the police station. Police response time would be 5-10 minutes if a vehicle were available. Although there is a back exit out of this facility, this exit leads to the front entrance of the facility.

In the event of a medical emergency, patients would be taken to the Central Hospital in Nampula. The hospital would be able to offer basic care, although a thorough assessment of their capabilities, expertise, and level of competence was not possible during the assessment visit. First aid kits are

supposed to be located in each UNHCR vehicle and at the UNHCR office in Nampula, but none were available for review during the assessment. There is a medical clinic at the camp with basic medical supplies and first aid equipment. UNHCR has also recently purchased a Land Rover Ambulance which will be in operation soon. The plan is for this ambulance to be located at the camp, however it is currently parked at the UNCHR office in Nampula.

B. Communication

UNHCR workers utilize fixed and handheld simplex VHF radios for communications. A base station is located at the office in Nampula and at the camp, and vehicles are equipped with high power radios. Communication is possible between Nampula and the camp. Cell phone communication is clear in Nampula city but very spotty at the camp. Cell calls from the camp were not possible during the assessment visit. UNCHR does not have any satellite phones in Nampula.

The PRM provincial commandant is Mr. Fernando Pedro Saiete, fixed line 258-06-213290. The PRM director of public order is Mr. Julio Denja who can be contacted at the fixed number 258-06-212273, or cell 258-82-629-0110. Mr. Denja should be the first point of contact in the event of an emergency and should only be contacted in the event of an emergency. Any other communication with the local police will be made through the RSO office at post. The PRM camp commandant is Mr. Mareriche Chicope who should be contacted in person while at the camp in the event of an emergency. The PRM forces at the camp communicate with headquarters in Nampula by the use of messengers or by utilizing the UNHCR radio to contact the UNHCR office in Nampula.

C. Country Conditions

The official State Department web site should be consulted about information regarding country conditions, travel warnings, and threat assessment. Anti-American sentiment is fairly low in Mozambique and especially in the camp. The biggest threat facing U.S. citizens visiting Mozambique is crime. The State Department has designated Mozambique a critical-threat post for crime. Street crime and vehicle hijackings are common and can be violent. Visitors must be vigilant when out in public areas and should not display jewelry or other items of high value. Visitors should avoid carrying backpacks or purses, as these can draw unwanted attention of would-be muggers.

D. Hotel and Transportation

Three hotels were evaluated during the site assessment. Transportation concerns were addressed in Section A of this communication.

(1) Hotel Residencial Recol: This is a four-story structure with one entry/exit point. There are no fire alarms and fire suppression is limited to a few fire extinguishers throughout the building. The hotel is protected by one unarmed and one armed guard. The reception area is manned 24 hours. Rooms are of acceptable condition as compared to other local hotels.

(2) Hotel Residencial Expresso: This is a two-story structure with one entry/exit point and one back ladder from the second story that could be used as an emergency exit. There are no fire alarms and fire suppression is limited to a several fire extinguishers on each floor and a fire hose on each floor. The hotel is protected by two unarmed guards. The reception area is manned 24 hours. Rooms are of acceptable condition as compared to other local hotels.

(3) Hotel Brasilia: This is a three-story structure with one entry/exit point. There are no fire alarms and fire suppression is limited to a few fire extinguishers throughout the building. Close inspection showed these extinguishers to be old and in poor condition. The hotel is protected by three unarmed guards. The reception area is manned 24 hours. Rooms are of less than acceptable condition as compared to other local hotels.

12. A limited number of photographs were taken during the site security assessment and will be furnished upon request via official channels. Official visitors to Mozambique are requested to provide a country clearance request with sufficient notice with a detailed overview of the nature, scope, location, and duration of the visit.

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